2002, 10♂♂ 10♀♀ of *X. laeviusculi* emerged. The identity of the males was confirmed using Skuhravá (1997) who provides excellent illustrations of the antenna and genitalia of the species. The male antennal segments are very distinctive. Each flagellomere has the middle part of the distal node so constricted that it appears to be divided into three nodes – each with one whorl of circumfilar loops. By contrast, the male flagellome of *P. galliperda* has the middle part of the distal node only slightly constricted. *X. laeviusculi* appears to be a poorly recorded species in Europe. Skuhravá (1986) and Skuhravá *et al.* (1998) give its distribution as the Czech and Slovak Republics, Germany and Great Britain. The larvae of *P. galliperda* are known to suck sap from the gall tissues of its host (Skuhravá *et al.*, 1998). The larvae of *X. laeviusculi* probably behave in a similar manner although little is known about is biology.

Voucher specimens have been deposited in the National Museum of Ireland.

Acknowledgement

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Dingy Skipper *Erynnis tages* (L.) (Lep.: Hesperiidae) and Northern Brown Argus *Aricia artaxerxes* (Fabr.) (Lep.: Lycaenidae) apparently lost from the Banffshire coast after grazing ceased

The Dingy Skipper *Erynnis tages* maintains a curiously isolated population, well north of its main distribution in Britain, along the dry and sunny inner Moray Firth where the low annual average rainfall rivals that of East Anglia. In the past, the butterfly has extended as far east as Banffshire. There are nineteenth century records, and W. Slater found two colonies near Portknockie in the early 1960s (*Entomologist* **97**: 152). On these grounds, Barbour (1976) included Dingy Skipper in his list of the macrolepidoptera of Banffshire (*Ent. Rec.* **88**: 1-11). The Portknockie record appears as a dot for square NJ 46 on the distribution map in *The Butterflies of Great Britain*

and Ireland (Harley Books, 1990) but is not shown in *The Millennium Atlas* (Oxford University Press, 2001).

For Northern Brown Argus *Aricia artaxerxes*, the Banffshire situation is similar. Barbour (*loc. cit.*) mentions two colonies on the coast, one as recent as 1972, while the *MBGBI* map for the species gives two post-1970 dots, only one of which appears in *The Millennium Atlas*.

When I moved to Banffshire in 1990, there was no reason at first to suspect that anything had changed. North-east Scotland has escaped the worst excesses of habitat destruction so frequent further south – in fact, the overall pattern is one of gains (Speckled Wood *Pararge aegeria*, Ringlet *Aphantopus hyperantus*, and recently Peacock *Inachis io*). However, in spite of an ever-increasing amount of fieldwork over the following years I failed to find Dingy Skipper or Northern Brown Argus. In 1995 Rosemary Smith and I walked 40 kilometres of the coastline during a survey of the Small Blue *Cupido minimus*, but saw neither of the other species.

There remained the possibility that I was not looking in the right places. Thus, I was delighted to make contact with Bill Slater himself, the author of the original records, who agreed to take me to the exact spots near Portknockie where he had found the butterflies as a boy. On 4.vi.2002, we visited his main Dingy Skipper site in reasonably good weather conditions. It was a small cove I had checked several times without success in previous years. The habitat did not look right: there was scarcely any of the bare ground that the butterfly likes, and very little trefoil or vetch for foodplant. Disappointed, we went next to his second site for Dingy Skipper as well as Northern Brown Argus. I was about to walk straight past until he called me back. The habitat, a large sheltered hollow amongst the cliffs, was even more unsuitable than the first, being wholly overgrown with coarse rank vegetation dominated by tall grass, bracken, gorse and bramble. There was no sign of any rockrose *Helianthemum* and only a few patches of trefoil or vetch. Clearly both butterflies were long gone. Here and there was a sad indication of what the habitat must once have been like – the remains of huge anthills perhaps centuries old, now shaded out and unoccupied. It was easy to imagine them topped with flowery cushions of rock-rose and thyme.

Why had the cliff habitat deteriorated in this way? In many places on the Banffshire coast long-derelict fence lines can be seen, running up and down the slopes. Had the cliffs once been grazed? Indeed they had: hardy sheep brought in from farms in Orkney and the Hebrides used to be over-wintered on the braes, as the cliffs were known. To maintain the quality of the grazing, coarse invasive vegetation was regularly controlled by burning. Now, both practices have largely died out, and the few Roe Deer present make little impression.

There are obvious management implications for the conservationist here. Heavy grazing certainly depresses insect populations, but at least it provides a stable situation. If such grazing is reduced or stopped, butterflies in particular often undergo a population explosion, apparent proof of how harmful the grazing had been. Unfortunately this tends to be followed by a long slow decline to extinction as

vegetation succession insidiously destroys the habitat. I feel it is important to put this clear-cut instance on record.

Fortunately the Dingy Skipper still survives on coastal shingle in Moray to the west, while colonies of Northern Brown Argus flourish further inland in Banffshire, on limestone around Tomintoul. There are twenty or more Small Blue colonies along the Banffshire coast where natural erosion of the cliffs maintains suitable conditions for the foodplant, Kidney Vetch *Anthyllis vulneraria.*

I thank Bill Slater for his help and input. — Roy Leverton, Whitewells, Ordiquhill, Cornhill, Banffshire AB45 2HS.

Cryptocephalus bipunctatus (L.) (Col.: Chrysomelidae) in Perthshire

In April 1999, a male and female (*in copula*) of the splendid black and orange beetle *Cryptocephalus bipunctatus* (L.) were found on the south-facing cliffs of Kinnoull Hill, Perthshire (O.S. grid reference NO1322; VC 89). They were kindly identified for me by Magnus Sinclair. On 12 August 2000, an obviously gravid female of the same species was found at the same place. These seem to be the most northerly British records for the species to date. The only previously published Scottish records are from the south-west of Scotland, namely Kirkcudbrightshire (VC 73) (*Annals Scot. Nat. Hist.* **1892**: 112) and Wigtownshire (VC 74) (1973. *Ent. Mon. Mag.* **109**: 112). The current discovery is unlikely to be a recent colonisation as a decade ago, on 9 June 1990, I found the case-bearing larva of a *Cryptocephalus* species on the same part of Kinnoull Hill. It was in short turf near a small larch *Larix* tree. The case was about six millimetres long and superficially resembled a rabbit faecal pellet or the leaf-bearing nodule off a larch twig. It could conceivably have belonged to the present species, but attempts to rear it failed.– Keith P. Bland, National Museums of Scotland, Chambers Street, Edinburgh EH1 1JF.

Cimbex connatus (Schrank) (Hym.: Cimbicidae) at a Devon supermarket car park

Cimbex connatus is the rarest of the three British *Cimbex* species. It had been reported from several locations in southern England in the early part of the twentieth century, including Devon, where it was last reported as larvae on alder at Leighan Valley in 1947 (Benson, 1951. Hymenoptera: Symphyta Section (a), *Handbooks for the identification of British insects*, **6** (2a)). After that, a lack of records led to the belief that it had become extinct in Britain. In 1997, a female was found near the River Nadder near Compton Chamberlayne, Wiltshire (Edmunds & Springate, 1998. *Br. J. ent. nat. Hist.* **11**: 65-68).

The presence of this scarce sawfly at Barton, near Torquay, Devon (O. S., grid reference SX 907 666), was drawn to my attention in early October 2000 when larvae were sent to me for identification. They were feeding on alder (*Alnus* sp.) leaves on trees that had been planted for landscaping purposes around a car park for